

## NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

D.T.E. 02-49

September 20, 2002

Petition of Western Massachusetts Electric Company for approval of the issuance and sale of long-term debt securities in an amount not to exceed \$105 million in principal, pursuant to G.L. c. 164, § 14, and exemption from the competitive bidding requirements of G.L. c. 164, § 15.

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Western Massachusetts Electric Company ("WMECo" or "Company") filed a petition with the Department of Telecommunications and Energy ("Department") requesting approval to issue and sell long-term debt securities, in an amount not to exceed \$105 million in principal, during the period October 1, 2002 through December 31, 2003. G.L. c. 164, § 14 requires electric companies to obtain the approval of the Department prior to issuing indebtedness payable at a period of more than one year. According to the Company, proceeds from the sale will refinance a portion of outstanding short-term debt, which was incurred by WMECo for investment in working capital and construction projects, and will finance WMECo's prior spent nuclear fuel obligations to the U.S. Department of Energy pursuant to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act. As part of its petition, the Company seeks approval to enter into interest rate hedges. In addition, WMECo seeks an exemption from G.L. c. 164, § 15, which requires the Company to publicize or invite bids for the proposed transaction(s). WMECo contends that such an exemption will result in benefits to the Company and its customers, and is, therefore, in the public interest.

The Department will conduct a public hearing on Tuesday, October 29, 2002, at 10:00 A.M. at the Department's offices, One South Station, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Boston, Massachusetts 02110. An evidentiary hearing will follow immediately thereafter. The Company's petition may be inspected at the Department's offices, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Additionally, the Company shall make the petition available for inspection at the Company's offices at 74 Brush Hill Avenue, West Springfield, MA, 01089.

Any person who desires to file written comments or to otherwise participate in this proceeding shall submit an original and three (3) copies of such written comments, or petition for leave to intervene in the proceeding, with Mary L. Cottrell, Secretary, Department of

Telecommunications and Energy, One South Station, Boston, Massachusetts 02110, not later than the close of business (5:00 P.M.) on Wednesday, October 9, 2002. A copy of all written comments or petitions to intervene should be sent to the Company's attorneys, Stephen Klionsky, Esq., Northeast Utilities Service Company, 101 Federal Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02110 and Leonard Rogriquez, Esq., Northeast Utilities Service Company, P.O. Box 270, Hartford, CT 06141-0270.

A petition for leave to intervene must satisfy the timing and substantive requirements of 220 C.M.R. § 1.03. Receipt by the Department, not mailing, constitutes filing and determines whether a petition has been timely filed. A petition filed late may be disallowed as untimely, unless good cause is shown for waiver under 220 C.M.R. § 1.01(4). To be allowed, a petition under 220 C.M.R. § 1.03(1) must satisfy the standing requirements of G.L. c. 30A, § 10.

All written comments or petitions to intervene also should be submitted to the Department in electronic format using one of the following methods: (1) by e-mail attachment to [dte.efiling@state.ma.us](mailto:dte.efiling@state.ma.us) or (2) on a 3.5" disk, IBM-compatible format. The text of the e-mail or the disk label must specify: (1) the docket number of the proceeding (D.T.E. 02-49), (2) name of the person or company submitting the filing, and (3) a brief descriptive title of the document. The electronic filing should also include the name, title and phone number of a person to contact in the event of questions about the filing. Text responses should be written in either Word Perfect (naming the document with a ".wpd" suffix), in Microsoft Word (naming the document with a ".doc" suffix), or as an Adobe PDF file (naming the document with a ".pdf" suffix). Data or spreadsheet responses should be compatible with Microsoft Excel. All written pleadings or comments submitted in electronic format will be posted on the Department's Website, <http://www.mass.gov/dpu>.

ORDER OF NOTICE

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Western Massachusetts Electric Company ("WMECo" or "Company") shall, no later than fourteen (14) days prior to Tuesday, October 29, 2002, give notice of said hearing by publication in the Springfield Union News and either The Boston Globe or the Boston Herald. The Company is required to make return of service at the time of the public hearing.

By Order of the Department,

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MARY L. COTTRELL, SECRETARY